

 Phoebe

Messenger

News from Phoebe Ministries

Volume 106, Issue 2 | Fall/Winter 2025

*The Pets of
Phoebe*

PLUS: New
Technologies,
New Ways
to Care

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2024-2025**



Table of Contents

PATHSTONES

- 16 Pathstones by Phoebe Celebrates 10 Years of Aging with Confidence

THE ART OF LIVING

- 4 The Pets of Phoebe
16 Tom Dilts and the Pursuit of Giving
18 Building Community Through Cooking: The Phoebe Berks Cookbook

PHOEBE AT WORK

- 10 New Technologies, New Ways to Care
12 A Year of Harvesting at Phoebe Organic Farm
20 The Strength to Overcome: Covid-19 Five Years Later
22 Faith in Action Rolls Out a New Look
23 17th Annual Golf Tournament

PHOEBE PHARMACY

- 24 Did You Know? Missed Medications

ANNUAL REPORT

- 25 Introduction to the Annual Report
26 A Message from the Executive Director
27 Celebrating Generosity
30 Phoebe's Impact at a Glance
32 Governance and Leadership
34 Financial Summary
36 Thanking Our Partners

On the cover: Chestnut Ridge resident Ruth Powers and Harley.

Editor's note: Sadly, Harley passed away during final production of the *Messenger*.



Phoebe-Devitt Homes is the official name of the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation doing business as Phoebe Ministries. Founded in 1903 and incorporated as such in 1984, Phoebe-Devitt Homes is responsible for the supervision of communities, long-range planning, development, and fundraising for a network of retirement communities, affordable housing, pharmacies, and a continuing care at home program, which combined serve thousands of seniors annually.

Phoebe Ministries is affiliated with the United Church of Christ and is a member of LeadingAge, LeadingAge PA, and the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

The official registration and financial information of Phoebe-Devitt Homes may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania at 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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Mission Statement:

A community of faith, called by God, to enrich the lives of our seniors, their families, and the communities we serve.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

From fireside chats with friends to relishing in life's little joys, we hope this issue of the *Messenger* brings warmth to your 2025 memories.

We've accomplished so many great things together this year, and we are excited to continue growing while serving our aging community with compassion and grace. We've expanded services and activities, introduced new technologies to support caregivers, and proudly supported 437 residents through charitable care. None of this would be possible without our donors, who we thank in this year's Annual Report.



In the following pages, you'll find stories of reflection and milestones. This year, we celebrate the 10th anniversary of Pathstones, a program that helps its members prepare for unforeseen health events by offering care coordination that allows seniors to remain in the home. Pathstones has remained a pillar of our mission to serve seniors dutifully and flexibly.

You'll hear from residents who live with their pets and the companionship fostered by that relationship. It's proof that pets can also be part of the Phoebe family, even if it's pet technology.

We are thrilled to share an update about Phoebe Organic Farm's first major harvest and the partnership between Phoebe Ministries and the Rodale Institute. Many residents of Chestnut Ridge have embraced the program, and ingredients have begun appearing in resident dishes. This innovative program marks an important step forward for us in sustainability and health.

As we look ahead, Phoebe remains focused on innovation, quality care, and empowering older adults to live fully. It is my honor to lead this organization into a future where aging is embraced, supported, and celebrated.

On behalf of Phoebe Ministries, thank you for being part of our family. We wish you and your loved ones a very happy holiday season and a new year filled with peace, health, and connection.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott R. Stevenson".

Scott R. Stevenson
President & CEO



Zibrio Balance Scale

The Art of Living | RESIDENTS AND THEIR FURRY FRIENDS



The Pets of Phoebe



Anyone who has ever owned a pet knows the value these lovable companions bring to one's life. Pets provide us with unconditional joy, comfort, and company. Their mere presence can be both comforting and fulfilling.

At Phoebe Ministries, we are happy to offer multiple pet-friendly campuses that improve the quality of life for our residents. Take resident Janet Mcilhenny and her 5-year-old dog Poe, for example.

Named after Edgar Allan Poe (and shortened to just "Poe" to reflect his small stature), the poodle bichon mix was two years old when Mcilhenny adopted him. It was love at first sight when they met each other's gaze.

One of Mcilhenny's favorite early memories of Poe was bringing him home and introducing him to her fenced-in yard in Allentown, PA.

"I swear his eyeballs almost fell out," says Mcilhenny. "He was so excited. To him, the yard was huge."

Mcilhenny rescued Poe after he spent six months on the streets of Philadelphia. Poe had been abused and neglected by

a previous owner, but the bond he and Mcilhenny built has helped heal his emotional wounds.

Since the two of them moved into an apartment at Phoebe Berks in 2023, Poe has become a rockstar on campus.

"Everyone loves Poe. They all come up and pet him," says Mcilhenny. Faces light up when people see Poe trotting along; many residents know him by name. Timothy Laffey, receptionist at Phoebe Berks, delights Poe with a treat whenever he stops by the lobby.

Although the switch from a house to an apartment has been jarring for the two of them, Poe and Mcilhenny have made do with the Phoebe Berks' neighboring trails in lieu of a backyard. The lightly wooded paths provide a quaint and shady option for them to get their walks in for the day.

And walk they do. Poe and Mcilhenny operate on a regimented schedule, one that Poe has memorized. It involves at least three miles of walking, specific sleeping spots, meal times, and a beloved morning ritual in which Poe places himself on the windowsill and surveys the people, pets, and cars below for at least half an hour.



Phoebe Berks resident Janet Mcilhenny cradles her dog Poe like a baby, a position that Poe has come to love, as evidenced by his smile.

Walking is particularly vital to Mcilhenny, whose history of strokes and other health concerns has made getting around somewhat difficult. These moments with Poe on the walking trails are not only a bonding experience but also a legitimate form of therapy for Mcilhenny. Her resilience is inspiring.

In much the same ways that Mcilhenny helped heal Poe from his past, Poe helps heal Mcilhenny through activity.

By contrast, even though resident John Weber of Phoebe Allentown relies on a wheelchair to get around, he still enjoys regular walks with his 14-year-old dog Paco. Exploring the local area with Paco is a great way for Weber to enjoy their home at Phoebe.

A chihuahua/pug mix, Paco was adopted at 8 years old while Weber lived in Emmaus, PA. A small but vocal dog, Paco is intimidated by larger dogs but excited by knocks at the door from new guests to meet.

“He loves people,” says Weber. Paco’s love is doubled for Weber’s daughter, who occasionally comes to collect Paco. When Paco isn’t in the apartment, Weber feels that absence. It’s safe to say that Paco has become a part of life at Phoebe for Weber.

On instances when Weber’s daughter stops by the apartment when Paco isn’t there, Paco picks up on her scent when he returns. It’s a testament to the power of Paco’s nose and his love of family.

Paco has grown increasingly independent and solitary with age, but the love between him and Weber hasn’t waned. Paco cries at the door when Weber leaves, making his eventual return much sweeter.

Taking a walk on the feline side is Phoebe Allentown resident Eleanor Miller with her cat, Ellie.



Dogs were excited about the opening of the new Dog Park at Chestnut Ridge.

Ellie, now 10 years old, was adopted by Miller from her local veterinarian's office. Like most new cats, Ellie was rather timid around Miller for the first few weeks, spending a lot of time hiding.

Today, however, Ellie is a social butterfly who greets guests with friendliness and curiosity.

Miller has always been a cat lover, so finding a home where she could have a cat was essential. Ellie's independent nature makes it easy for Miller to take advantage of campus activities without worrying about taking her pet outside.

Ellie often sleeps on Miller's lap at night in their recliner, but she's an acrobat in the morning. She enjoys water from the sink tap and will watch Miller do the dishes. Then, she'll hop from the kitchen counter to the living room table and onto the couch.

Having that constant friend has helped Miller combat moments of loneliness.

"Even though she can't answer, I talk to her," Miller laughs. Their connection has brought Miller deep comfort and companionship over the years.

Newly printed signs line the perimeter of the Chestnut Ridge Dog Park.



The Art of Living | RESIDENTS AND THEIR FURRY FRIENDS

Meanwhile, at Chestnut Ridge at Rodale, residents take advantage of the campus' dog park and dog washroom. The former has recently been fitted with new signs and two distinct areas for small and large dogs, while the latter provides a sanitary and convenient way for dog owners to get their furry friends looking and smelling their best.

Christine Widgren and her three-year-old dog Chula (Spanish for "cute") live at Chestnut Ridge and are excited to use the dog park now that the infrastructure is complete. Like Poe at Phoebe Berks, everybody at Chestnut Ridge knows Chula.

"She's like an ambassador," laughs Widgren.

When therapy animals can't be on campus, robotic animals provide a great alternative. Phoebe's robotic animals come from Joy For All, which feel, look, and sound like real animals.

According to the University of Plymouth, robotic animals have been found to reduce symptoms of depression and delusion when compared to those living without them. Another study from the Journal of Holistic Nursing

found that loneliness was decreased significantly among senior citizens with dementia when robotic animals were incorporated into care.

A trip to Phoebe Richland's memory care unit provides a few great examples of this. Resident Ruth, for instance, has a "cat" whom she always greets when coming home to her apartment. Though the animal is robotic, it provides her valuable company, and Snyder talks to her and feeds her like any other cat.

"She's a good girl," she says. Ruth's cat is accompanied by a teddy bear, whom she says her cat had to "warm up" to at first.

Another resident of Phoebe Richland, Barbara, has a "cat" that rarely leaves her lap. Barbara's mobility restrictions make a robotic animal a perfect compromise to a real pet, as it offers companionship in a portable, accessible package.

Several Phoebe campuses also feature lobby pets for residents who don't wish to bear the responsibility of a pet but still want a friend to interact with.



Above: Phoebe Allentown resident Eleanor Miller's cat, Ellie.

Left: Phoebe Richland resident Ruth smiles with her robotic pet cat.

Research has shown that simply petting a dog or cat lowers stress, which is why therapy animals have become such a widespread tool in addressing mental health concerns. Phoebe will often invite therapy animals from the local community to its campuses.



These animals happily greet guests as they come in and range from birds to fish. Stopping to say “hi” to these delightful creatures is a highlight for many of our staff and community members.

Even when residents aren’t greeting lobby pets, another resident’s pet making its way around campus is always good for a smile. The presence of resident pets is an instant mood booster.

We know the pets of Phoebe bring light and joy to the lives of our residents. As long as our community benefits from having pets, we are happy to have them. *Now that’s paw-fect!* 🐾

To learn more about Phoebe, visit phoebe.org.

Right: Chestnut Ridge resident Fran Kline and Katie.

Bottom: Birds welcome visitors to many of Phoebe’s campuses and are a welcome friend to residents.



New Technologies, New Ways to Care

Over the past year, Phoebe adopted many exciting new technologies to keep innovation at the forefront of our care. These fascinating innovations allow us to deliver the most effective services possible while maintaining compassion at the core of our mission.

In our last issue of the *Messenger*, you read about how our new **Tovertafel Memory Table**, an interactive game console built specifically for seniors living with dementia, marks an important step forward in our memory care program. The table increases brain activity through fun, interactive activities while decreasing stress, negative emotions, and restlessness.

Many residents have also tried our virtual reality headsets from **Rendever**. These headsets offer a simple and easy-to-use form of virtual reality that allows residents to be transported to new places. Now, our residents with reduced mobility can explore the world in the blink of an eye when physical traveling becomes difficult.

Recently, we've rolled out the **Zibrio balance scale** to all campuses. Supported by NASA-grade technology, the scale has residents stand as still as possible for 60 seconds while it measures minuscule movements. Then, the resident is given a score out of 10 based on their likelihood of falling within a year.

From there, therapy services at Phoebe can use that data to determine if a resident needs extra care to address balance concerns. It is our hope that this will help our residents stay safer longer.

Similarly, an in-home A.I. system from **Inspiren called AUGi** (short for Augmented Intelligence) will help caregivers at Phoebe prevent falls when they can't be inside the resident's home.

AUGi is placed inside the home and learns a resident's movement tendencies. It does this by representing the



Rendever VR Headsets



Zibrio Balance Scale



Inspiren AUGi



Wicked Sheets

resident as a stick figure through radar motion technology. For privacy reasons, it does not have video recording capabilities.

Based on what the system has learned in the training period, it can predict a potential fall when analyzing how a resident moves before they get up. The system will then alert a caregiver to a potential imminent fall, and they can reach the resident before it happens.

AUGi will roll out to memory support neighborhoods across Phoebe. This technology, combined with the Zibrio scale, gives caregivers more tools to minimize falls.

Lastly, we've also begun offering smart bedsheets from **Wicked Technologies**, which notify caregivers of incontinence events. These Wicked sheets detect moisture and quicken staff response time in the event of an accident.

Wicked sheets will be offered as an optional package for Phoebe residents.

These technologies make us more responsive, resulting in better care and quality of life for our residents.

We are so excited to incorporate these new innovations across our organization. Phoebe is committed to remaining at the forefront of quality senior services; these latest developments are just one way we do so. ☎

These technologies make us more responsive.

Chestnut Ridge Wellness Coordinator Debbie Rose uses the Zibrio Balance Scale to check resident Ruth Powers' stability.



A Year of Harvesting at Phoebe Organic Farm

Since the groundbreaking of Phoebe Organic Farm on November 6, 2024, the partnership between the Rodale Institute and Phoebe Ministries has been warmly embraced by Chestnut Ridge residents as fresh food makes its way to the campus. Over the past year, the farm has undergone its first few major harvests and is now winding down for the winter.

In the summer, Phoebe Organic Farm was at its greenest. Between last November's groundbreaking and the hottest months of this year, the farm exploded in color and volume. Rows upon rows of crops were arranged and organized into distinct sections for different crop types.

This year, Phoebe Organic Farm relied on the Rodale Institute's Kutztown location for early seedings while the greenhouse at the farm remains under construction. A series of seeding events were held in the spring, during which residents could spend a morning at the Rodale Institute's pristine campus while learning about planting through hands-on activities.

Though the restoration of the greenhouse is still being carefully considered due to the historical legacy of the property (also known as "Founder's Farm" in recognition of the Rodale Institute's beginnings), the current plan is for seedings to begin on location in the summer of 2026.

"[The Rodale Institute] wants to restore the greenhouse in a way that does justice to the property, the history, and Phoebe," says Phoebe Organic Farm Manager Jennifer Smith (a.k.a Farmer Jenni).

Smith says she feels the land's historical power whenever she sets foot on the farm: "It feels so special here." With Rodale being a national leader in organic farming, Phoebe Organic Farm aims to continue the institute's legacy. Founder's Farm is even recognized on the National Historical Society list.

Phoebe Organic Farm's first full year was a successful one. Harvesting days were typically scheduled on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, with deliveries to Chestnut Ridge every Wednesday. Smith herself drives a van full of crops to Chestnut Ridge, where residents eagerly await her.

The farming season typically ends around late October and early November, though the biggest indicator of when it's time to stop is the first frost. Frost usually decimates whatever crops are being grown. That's when Smith and her team remove everything from the fields and plant cover crops to enrich the soil for the next few months.

Winter gives Smith and her team time to organize equipment and machinery. It's also a time of intense planning and supply gathering.

"Once you're back in it, you just go," says Smith.

Another highlight of the year has been the opportunity for residents to arrange flower



Rows of crops stretch across Phoebe Organic Farm.



Farmer Jenni holds up a freshly plucked handful of potatoes.



bouquets. Phoebe Organic Farm has grown wonderfully vibrant flowers, and Rodale has offered on-site and off-site arranging sessions for those who want to assemble a bouquet and brighten up their homes.

So much has been produced that the farm has started delivering to Phoebe Allentown and the Phoebe Apartments with a goal to eventually expand to Phoebe Berks. Soon, Phoebe Organic Farm will work to address food education and inequity, particularly for our residents in affordable housing.

As for the food itself, some of the most popular ingredients for residents of Chestnut Ridge this year were snap peas, broccoli, tomatoes, potatoes, lettuce, and onions.

“The residents are really excited to see fresh produce there,” says Smith.

Smith hopes that projects like Phoebe Organic Farm, as well as many more opportunities to educate the public, will strengthen the hold of organic farming and eating on our culture.

“The newer generations are way more aware of what’s in our food and what we’re putting in our bodies,” says Smith. “I think that there is more of a commitment to eating organic. That can only translate to the older generations because they have grandsons and granddaughters saying, ‘This is why I do this.’ It allows

for a bridging of that generational gap.”

Organic, regenerative farming is not just good for the planet.

Eliminating harmful additives and chemicals from our crops also means food grown with greater nutritional and safety values. Rodale has actively pushed this movement through partnerships with educational institutions and political lobbying.

“We want to make eating organic as easy as fast food because that’s what people are used to,” says Smith. “People go for ease.”

Phoebe shares Rodale’s passion for sustainability and health as we continue to take care of our aging population.

“I believe Rodale is a unique, amazing organization,” says Phoebe President & CEO Scott Stevenson. “They are world leaders in their areas of expertise and have an international impact in their field.”

Stevenson also notes that the deep love and connection to our local community has tied Phoebe Ministries and the Rodale Institute together. It will be amazing to see what the two organizations can accomplish together as we build a greener future. 🌱



Pathstones by Phoebe

Celebrates 10 Years of Aging with Confidence



Ten years ago, Phoebe Ministries launched Pathstones by Phoebe—a bold, innovative program empowering older adults to age in place with confidence, flexibility, and peace of mind. Since then, over 134 members have embraced this unique blend of wellness coordination and care navigation. Pathstones benefits its members by allowing them to remain independent and in their own homes while offering the security of a continuing care retirement community.

“People want to age in place,” says Lisa Hoffman, Executive Director of Pathstones. “Most will need care, but few plan for it. That’s where Pathstones steps in—with trusted guidance and lifelong support.”

Pathstones helps members build realistic care plans and can fill gaps left by traditional medical and long-term care

insurance. At the heart of the program are dedicated Wellness Coordinators who stay connected, promote healthy living, and coordinate services when needed.

“We’re not just care planners—we’re companions on our members’ journeys,” says Mimi Leinbach, Sr. Wellness Coordinator. “We get to witness incredible transformations.”

“Our members are trailblazers,” Hoffman says. “They chose a future on their own terms and now they’re showing others the way.”

Don and Alison Seibert became Pathstones’ first members in September 2015.

“When we first became aware of the Pathstones program, we knew it was the right decision for us as we had been

Pathstones’ first members, Don and Alison Seibert.





Freedom to remain in their home is important to Jerry and Carolyn Holleran.



Mimi Leinbach, Sr. Wellness Coordinator.



Lisa Hoffman, Executive Director.

exploring other options for aging in place,” says Don. “We viewed this as the best way for us to preserve assets for our family and relieve them of the burden of caring for us. We appreciate the contact with the Pathstones staff as they monitor our wellness checkups, and we enjoy the various social and educational events offered during the year.”

Members like Carolyn and Jerry Holleran feel that Pathstones has helped keep all their alternatives open. They have the freedom to remain in their home, but appreciate that the option of a retirement community like Phoebe is there for them. Marilyn Wademan and Ed Kershner find that membership in Pathstones has provided them with the plan they knew they needed for aging. With Pathstones, they can stay in the home they love and still be able to host family and friends.

From healthier habits to renewed purpose, members often report life-enhancing changes. One member shared how her husband became more active and health-conscious after joining the program. Pathstones had helped him realize the importance of taking the best care of himself.

Over the years, strong partnerships, especially with Comforting Home Care by Phoebe, have kept services

seamless. New technology and concierge services like Dorvie offer even more support—from fall detection to lawn care—ensuring members can thrive at home.

“We see people in their 70s and 80s living fully—gardening, biking, caring for grandkids,” says Leinbach. “They’re aging—but they’re also inspiring.”

As Pathstones looks to expand beyond Lehigh, Northampton, and Berks into Bucks and Montgomery counties, its mission remains strong.

“Pathstones has become a shining example of Phoebe’s commitment to innovation and compassionate care,” says Scott Stevenson, President & CEO of Phoebe Ministries. “Here’s to 10 amazing years—and many more to come.” 🍷

If you would like to learn more about how Pathstones can help you age in place with confidence, please call 610-794-6700 or visit pathstonesbyphoebe.org.



Tom Dilts enjoys volunteering at Phoebe events such as the Century Circle socials.

Tom Dilts and the Pursuit of Giving

Every year, the Office of Philanthropy helps organize Century Circle Socials at each major Phoebe location. These socials are our way of saying “thank you” to our Century Circle donors who support Phoebe with \$1,000 or more each year. Tom Dilts is one such selfless individual.

At these events, residents and donors mingle in a meaningful and fun environment featuring entertainment, prizes, and food. Dilts has been regularly attending Century Circle Socials for some time now. The Office of Philanthropy reserves a seat for him and other donors with nametags, but you won’t find Dilts in his assigned seat.

Instead, he walks around the room, talks to residents, and lends a hand in running the event. The nametag and seat are mere suggestions. Dilts would much rather donate his time by scooping ice cream, serving drinks and snacks, and assisting with games—all in the pursuit of engaging with and giving back to the community more than he already has.

“Most organizations, when you give money, invite you to a cocktail party, a dinner, or a golf outing,” says Dilts. “Phoebe invites me to an assisted living facility to celebrate with residents. This is my kind of organization. I don’t want the dinner and all the other things. This is what I want: The chance to sit down with people, see how they’re doing, and be helpful in the process.” Dilts is also a Legacy Society member (those who have left a gift to Phoebe Ministries in their will or trust).

Dilts has held volunteer work, philanthropy, and community prosperity close to his heart for his entire life. As a lawyer, he worked for a major New Jersey law firm before opening his own private law office just 10 miles from where he grew up in Three Bridges.

Dilts began as a lawyer of general practice but would later become a New Jersey Superior Court Judge in 1991, where he oversaw cases of domestic violence, divorce, child abuse, and juvenile delinquency. His passion for helping people through such difficult life events has led to instrumental leadership in New Jersey’s

“Phoebe invites me to an assisted living facility to celebrate with residents. This is my kind of organization.”

—Tom Dilts

Domestic Violence Program. For 15 years, he also taught judges how to avoid gender discrimination in law.

In 2011, at age 63, Dilts retired from his Superior Court position to focus on mediation and pro bono work. Around this time, 15 of Dilts’s friends joined him in creating the Children’s Hope Initiative, an organization that supports programs and services for children of abuse and neglect. Dilts would also become the co-chair of the NJ Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, a position he holds to this day.

Dilts’s career has revolved around helping others, but this drive didn’t stop once he arrived at Phoebe. He moved to Chestnut Ridge at Rodale in 2024 after his wife’s passing. One of his primary goals in retirement was to continue to give thanks to the community for the privilege of being a judge.

One way he did this was by offering a genealogy service to his fellow residents. Dilts, along with five other skilled Genealogists at Chestnut Ridge, put out a call for residents to learn more about their family ancestry. The group would then gather information from said residents and return with a richer and more thoroughly researched history of that resident’s family.

“It’s been very rewarding,” says Dilts.

Dilts is also a founding member of the Photography Club at Chestnut Ridge. Currently comprised of 14 residents with varying levels of experience, the group aims to educate, practice, and share photography with the community. Dilts’s apartment is lined with his own impressive photos from years of travel.

In addition to his deep religious and social involvement, Dilts’s time at Chestnut Ridge has opened the door to many new hobbies and interests. He taught himself to play piano and learned Mahjong from his fellow residents. He takes pride in being active and cherishes the lunches and billiards matches with his friends.

Dilts is also a Pathstones member, which has given him the peace of mind to continue living the way he wants to: from taking care of the plants on his balcony to traveling. “It just makes financial sense as a health supplement,” says Dilts. Pathstones is ready to support Dilts should a health event occur.

“Phoebe Ministries provides a wonderful service for hundreds of people,” says Dilts. “It seems to me that people who are able should be making a contribution so that programs can go on into the future. It’s a worthy ministry. It’s good people doing important work for the right reasons.”

Phoebe Ministries is incredibly grateful to have the generous support of Tom Dilts and our many other donors. If you would like to join Tom Dilts in donating to Phoebe in support of quality senior services, please visit phoebe.org/donate. ☸

If you feel inspired by Tom's story and would like to donate to Phoebe, please visit phoebe.org/giving.

Tom Dilts stands proudly in front of some of his framed photographs.



Building Community Through Cooking:

The Phoebe Berks Cookbook

Top: A close-up of resident Barbara Esterly's Peach Cream Pie.

Right: Esterly showing off her baking skills.

Food often brings people together to form emotional connections and lifelong memories. With this spirit of community, Phoebe Berks' independent living staff and residents decided to compile their very own cookbook starting in January 2024. *The Phoebe Berks Campus Independent Living Residents' Cookbook* features recipes old and new from residents across the campus. For many contributors, these recipes bring joy to friends and family and are meant to be shared.

Led by former Independent Living Manager Robin Staudt, this 152-page cookbook took a year to complete. For help with the project, Staudt reached out to two residents, Jean Boyer and Ramona Bruch, who helped organize and compile each recipe. Alicea Rodig, Lifestyle Assistant, and Staudt began the process by reaching out to residents through campus newsletters and word of mouth.

Once they received their first submissions, both Boyer and Bruch got to work as editors. They began by creating the categories, including appetizers, breakfast, soups, and more. After establishing the categories, they retyped and formatted

the pages, adding photos, cooking tips, recipe jokes, and quote pages. When the final reviews were complete, the cookbook was ready to be printed and shared with the Phoebe Berks community.

To each contributing resident, the cookbook means a little something different. For resident contributors Susan and Mel Blum, sharing recipes brings joy and connects them with family and friends.

"Cooking for family--that's what food is all about," says Susan. "My husband and I really enjoy cooking together, and our family enjoys coming over to our Phoebe Cottage for meals together." The Blums collaborate when cooking together, finding new ways to make each dish unique to their tastes.

As Phoebe Berks Cottage residents, the Blums enjoy the ease of use their beautiful space offers. They often share deliciously crafted meals in their sunroom. As welcoming hosts, they



The front cover of the Phoebe Berks Cookbook.

frequently invite their fellow Cottage neighbors over for appetizers, drinks, charcuterie boards, and other homemade treats.

Another contributor, Phoebe Village resident Barbara Esterly, was eager to share 11 delicious recipes. As an avid baker, Esterly often shares her baked goods with the other residents on her floor, stopping by to chat and befriend her neighbors.

Food connects her not only with friends and neighbors, but with loved ones in her past. One recipe she has a deep connection with is shoefly pie. Esterly explains, "My mother was a great shoefly pie baker. Whenever I make a shoefly pie, I always think of her."

As a historic baking and cooking educator, Esterly wanted to submit her favorite 100-year-old crumb cake recipe for the cookbook. She often works with local historical sites, such as Daniel Boone Homestead in Birdsboro, Pennsylvania, and Johanna's Furnace Historic Site in Morgantown, Pennsylvania, where she demonstrates historical cooking and baking techniques to the public. For her, sharing these techniques and creating an immersive, historically accurate experience helps connect herself and others with people of

the past while highlighting the skill and labor that went into what was simply considered "women's work" at that time.

Each recipe in the *Phoebe Berks Campus Independent Living Cookbook* is not only delicious but also contains the potential for connection with others in the community.

Sharing a meal is a simple way to make friends, remember the past, and even spend quality time with loved ones. 🍷



To learn more about the wonderful community at Phoebe Berks, please visit phoebe.org/berks.

Susan and Mel Blum share a homemade meal in their Phoebe Berks Cottage.





The Grief Mosaic at Phoebe Berks was designed to help residents and staff express their feelings about the pandemic.

The Strength to Overcome: Covid-19 Five Years Later

For caregivers worldwide, the pandemic shook up daily routines and led to a massive pivot towards containing the spread of the virus and protecting our most vulnerable populations. For senior communities like Phoebe’s, the increased risk to older adults meant that Phoebe staff were tested to their limits to keep as many people safe as possible.

That’s why, five years after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we take this moment to reflect on how the world changed, what we’ve learned from this experience, and how the Phoebe community came together to push through.

“It was surreal,” says Cathy Bendel, MDS Coordinator at Phoebe Richland. “It’s hard to even fathom what was happening.” As the world learned about the coronavirus and how it spread, health care professionals had to adapt to new protocols to meet community needs.

“We were running all day,” says Phoebe Allentown Facility Administrative Assistant Linda Plunkett. One challenge was keeping protective equipment like masks, gloves, and hazard suits in stock. Refusing to sacrifice the safety of the community, hardworking staff like Plunkett contacted neighboring towns and cities to gather fabrics for masks. Plunkett herself would make extended trips just to gather said fabrics. Those masks were then hand-sewn by staff, residents, and the community to limit the spread.

“You did whatever was required,” says Phoebe Allentown Nursing Administrative Assistant Bobbi-Jo Novogoratz. Staff often worked longer shifts, and responsibilities morphed into one another. The commitment of Phoebe’s caregivers to their residents during this time was astounding.

“During that time, it was critical for leadership to focus on staff and how to support them better,” says President &

CEO Scott Stevenson. “We tried to provide the most supportive culture possible.” It was an “all hands on deck” scenario by every measure.

“The people that were here wanted to be here,” says Novogoratz.

The local community came together in ways that helped Phoebe and other facilities get through these difficult moments. Alcohol distilleries produced sanitary products, health care facilities communicated with each other about supplies, and local businesses donated food and candy.

Even with a united community, the physical and emotional loss associated with the pandemic could not be ignored.

Out of an abundance of caution, visits from family members took on a new form. At Phoebe Allentown, visiting booths were created to keep families physically separate but still able to interact with each other. Plunkett took on the responsibility of scheduling said visits.

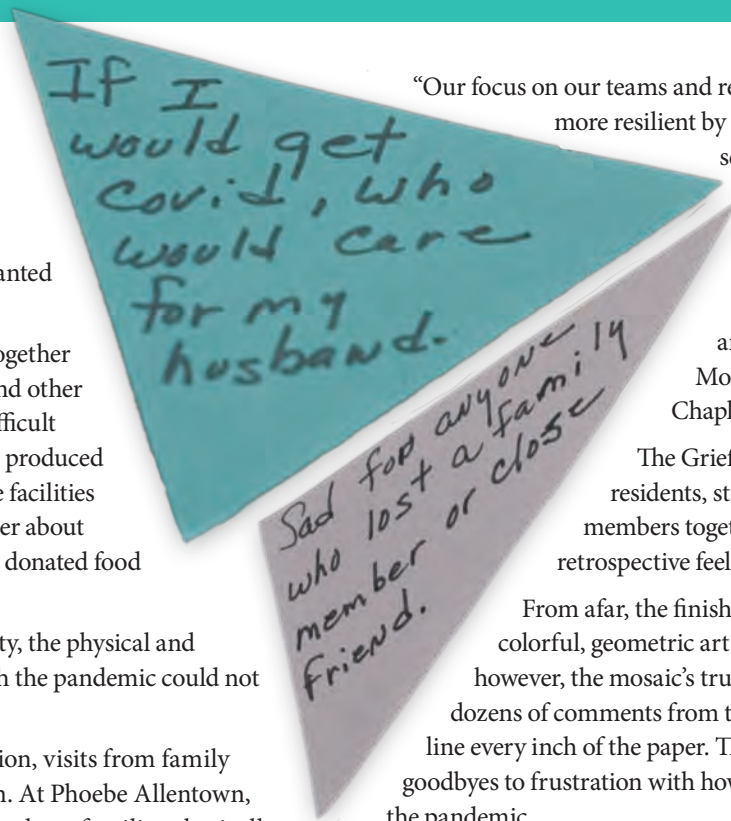
The visitation booths provided sufficient safety while attempting to avoid the dark realities of isolation on mental health.

“There were lots of tears at those booths,” says Novogoratz.

The loss of life was another unfortunate reality for people everywhere. Novogoratz remembers being invited to a resident’s family-only funeral, illustrating the deep connection between caregiver and patient. It’s not uncommon for residents to see Phoebe staff more often than their own families. That resulting bond is invaluable to both parties.

When asked if Phoebe and the world at large have emerged more resilient than before, former Vice President of Health Care Services Michell Staska-Pier doesn’t hesitate: “Absolutely.”

While we are far from weekly COVID tests for all employees, Phoebe has since established strategies and the battle-tested readiness to tackle another potential outbreak more efficiently. Today, Phoebe employs thorough contact tracing and testing if a resident contracts coronavirus. The threat of infection is met with the utmost care.



“Our focus on our teams and residents has helped us become more resilient by understanding how to better serve them,” says Stevenson.

That trauma extends to Phoebe residents as well. The complex emotions that come with trauma have been artfully captured in a Grief Mosaic led by Phoebe Berks Chaplain Tracey Marx.

The Grief Mosaic project brought residents, staff, volunteers, and family members together to share their complex, retrospective feelings following the pandemic.

From afar, the finished product appears to be a colorful, geometric art piece. On closer inspection, however, the mosaic’s truth is revealed. Dozens upon dozens of comments from the Phoebe Berks community line every inch of the paper. They range from heartbreaking goodbyes to frustration with how world leaders handled the pandemic.

“One way to help manage difficult emotions is to articulate them,” says Marx. “When you share those feelings with others and use them to create something artistic, the power of the grief can diminish. When we heard from others who were experiencing feelings much like ours, we were able to remember that we are not alone.”

Through it all, Phoebe pushed on. From staff to volunteers, the community came together in the face of one of our most difficult challenges.

We thank everyone who helped our organization through the pandemic. Our community pushed through because of our shared responsibility and compassion towards one another. To the families who lost a loved one as a result of the pandemic, we wish your family peace and healing.

May we learn from the past and continue on with resilience. 🙏

For more stories about Phoebe and our talented staff, please visit <https://phoebe.org/news-and-events/>.

“We tried to provide the most supportive culture possible.” —Scott Stevenson, President & CEO



The nursing staff at Phoebe Richland shows off their Faith in Action pride.

Faith in Action

Rolls Out a New Look

At Phoebe Ministries, faith isn't just what we believe—it's what we do. The Faith in Action Plan honors team members who bring Phoebe's values to life each day.

Accountability drives us to act with purpose and responsibility.

Compassion guides every word and gesture, reminding residents they are loved and seen.

Ethical Conduct and **Integrity** keep us honest, fair, and true to our mission.



Inspired by the **Fruit of the Spirit**, we live out love, joy, peace, patience, and kindness in every interaction.

Through **Respect**, we value every person with dignity and grace.

And with **Stewardship**, we manage our resources wisely to ensure Phoebe's legacy endures.

Because at Phoebe, faith isn't just belief—it's action. Live Fully, Live Phoebe. ☦

To learn more about our Faith in Action, please visit phoebe.org.

2025

Phoebe's 17th Annual GOLF TOURNAMENT

This year's Phoebe Golf Tournament proved once again how spectacular it can be when the community comes together in support of senior services.

Phoebe is proud to share that our 17th Annual Golf Tournament grossed over \$253,000 thanks to the 300 attendees (224 golfers) and the generous support of our sponsors. The tournament is our biggest fundraiser of the year, which supports our Charitable Care program. Funds directly benefits eligible residents in our community who have exhausted their resources amidst rising care costs.

Last year, Phoebe provided over \$16 million in support of our Charitable Care program.

Between the highly anticipated helicopter ball drop and the skill-based contests at numerous holes throughout Saucon Valley Country Club, it was another year packed with excitement.

We thank everyone in attendance for supporting seniors in need. We can't wait to see everyone on Monday, August 10, 2026, for our 18th Annual Golf Tournament!

For a list of information on tournament sponsors and winners, please visit phoebe.org/golf.



Phoebe thanks the 70+ volunteers and Friends of Phoebe for their valuable help on the day of the tournament.

Thank You to Our Generous 2025 Golf Tournament Sponsors!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba, PC** for their incredible support as the Golfer Giveaway Sponsor with a generous \$15,000 sponsorship.

A special thank you also goes to **Johnson Kendall Johnson** and **NewEdge Wealth**, our Awards Dinner Sponsors, for their generous \$10,000 sponsorships.

Your support helps make this a memorable and impactful event for all involved. Thank you for standing with Phoebe in support of our mission!



Great weather, a great course, and a great time for a great cause at Saucon Valley Country Club.

DID YOU KNOW?

MISSED MEDICATIONS

Missing prescribed medication doses can lead to severe complications for the patient. In some cases, the treated condition may worsen, and new health issues may be introduced.



When a charted medication is unavailable or missed:

DO

- Check all online, delivery, and storage records for the medication
- Consult your pharmacy for the next available delivery
- Replace medication stock as soon as possible
- Notify your doctor/prescriber and pharmacy of the missed dose
- Document when the dose was missed
- Monitor changes in health

DON'T

- Double the dose at the time of the next administration
- Assume that missing a dose is okay

Phoebe Pharmacy's state-of-the-art software system ensures accurate medication tracking from packaging to delivery.

Phoebe

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Live Fully. Live Phoebe.

Phoebe is dedicated to helping Pennsylvania's seniors get more out of each day while having all the lifestyle and health care services and resources they need in one place. Whether for yourself or a loved one, our communities are designed to meet the diverse lifestyle needs while fostering opportunities to be active and engaged in a close-knit setting.

Services for Residents include:

- Independent Living
- Personal Care
- Skilled Nursing
- Rehabilitation Services
- Memory Support
- Immedicare
- Mental Health Services
- TeleHealth

To learn about what Phoebe offers, scan the QR Code and fill out the short form to receive more information.

